

WTC MEETING THURSDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2025

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NOTES FROM MEETING – CLLR BARRY WAINWRIGHT

Members Present.

Alex Miscandlon AM, Peter Bibb PB, Diana Dickinson DD, Eamonn Dorlin ED, Deel Laws DL, Jason Mockett JM, Haq Nawaz HN, Elizabeth Sennitt-Clough ESC, Barry Wainwright BNW, Bob Wicks BW

F01/2025. To receive apologies from absent members and the reason for the apology.
Saheed Arman SA, Chris Boden CB, Roy Gerstner RG, Gurninder Singh Gill GSG.

F19/2025. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda items discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential under agenda item number F36/2025.

Residential Flats update
Drain Quote
Honorary Freeman

DL: Planning Portfolio Holder

BNW: F26/2025 Item 6 – member of Planning Committee

PB: ditto

AM: ditto

ESC: Same as FDC Planning.

(RG Note) Since this meeting taking place, there has been a great deal for Social Media commentary on the happening at this meeting.

I have been sent various reports and have a complete audio file of the said proceedings.

It would be entirely wrong for me to make any comment or judgement as I was not at the meeting and gave my apologies.

There may be repercussions and complaints and I would not wish to jeopardise any such event by publishing the incident, which resulted in most of the public leaving the meeting.

Likewise for the same reasons I will not make comment on how the meeting was handed/chaired.



F20/2025. Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV update

Highlight Fly Tipping.

(RG Note) Street Scene Report already published)

F21/2025. Police Report – Councillor only

No police report.

BNW: No meeting or report last month either. This is concerning.

JM: can we email to say not acceptable

F22/2025. To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Full Council Meeting on Thursday 23rd January 2025.

OK, with inclusion of paragraph omitted following DL's statement

F23/2025. Presentation by Tracey Macintosh – Funding Events for Military Veterans'

Whittlesey RBL make people aware of activities 29/3/2025 Great Tommie's Sleepout, raising money for RBLI 55 participants last year. Raised £4k last year.

Music night at Childers.

ESC: Thanks for good work.

AM: Beacon for the manor ordered and will be ready for VE day.

F24/2025. Presentation by Ashley Dolling, Fenland Project Officer – Country Park Environmental Project Officer.

Working with DL over viability of resurrecting the country park. Looking viable at the moment.

Location the same as previous. Land owners still willing to sell, subject to suitable offer.

Included in FDC nature recovery plan.

To be purchased by WTC, not FDC. Supported by FDC/Natural Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire Acre interested in taking on management of park, initial development.

A few issues to be determined, including access. Planning documents being prepared.

BW: Who is liable for ongoing management and maintenance?

AD: his responsibility to develop sustainable revenue generating support. Many questions still to be sorted. WTC to decide whether they want to take on management, or outsource to third party.

ED: Land is sparsely populated. What aims on increase of biodiversity

AD: Biodiversity Nett Gain is main aim of project. Having discussions with Univ. Cambs to ensure good plans. Exciting opportunity to show what nature recovery can achieve.

F25/2025. Public Forum 23 public present 6 wish to speak – 3 minute each

Lyn ?: Lived in Whittlesey all life. Medical professional. Concern on decline in infrastructure, which is getting worse. Not acceptable for elderly or infirm to stand outside to get medical appointments. Infrastructure has been neglected over many years. Needs to be prioritised before any more houses are built. Lack of duty of care to people of Whittlesey.

Margaret: Drybread Road. New development approved, as expected. Can we please make sure wheel washers are used? There should be restrictions on HGVs at school times
Houses are being built 6-7' above road

Alan Bessant: Please ensure any councillors attending liaison group ask for public input beforehand. Please report back on attendees and results. Would WTC take back control of Multi-agency meetings to take minutes & run meeting?

Andy Stimson: State of roads: coming out of Bellmans is bad. No white line marking at junction. Cars swerving across road to avoid potholes.

Patrick Nightingale: To echo first speaker. Wisbech getting £5.4m from incinerator project. A lot of commercial development in Whittlesey. Are we getting more funding for this? Would like feedback on what can be done to improve funding for the town.

William Cowling: Speaking on proposed development in Coates. A small village, now looking at 200 new houses. Sewage can't cope at present. Had tankers being used for weeks. No schooling, roads are atrocious. Whittlesey treatment plant almost overloaded already. Need infrastructure before houses.

Robert Windle: Friends of Manor set up 3 years ago. Next Tuesday bi-monthly meeting. Lot of publicity recently on proposals for the Manor. Presentation expected at that meeting. Meeting is available to all. Welcome to hear of plans for country park. Appears to be rushed, funding application deadline is March. Hoping there will be public consultation on content and usage of the park.

Lisa Whitwell: Station Road Rec: FDC Meeting on 24th. Are all councillors against the proposed sale of the Rec? Is there need for a consultation?

F26/2025. Agenda items for Discussion.

Country Park concept and proposal – Cllr Laws

Came to attention 3 weeks ago. Needs an expression of interest for funding. It is agricultural land. AD came with idea of it being a town project. Two different land owners. Very little different to previous plans. Country park would offer use to cubs, scouts etc. meadow area for picnics, track around for walking running etc.

No guarantees that it will happen, but looking for WTC support.

Free to access. Maybe car park charges and café franchise.

PB: what does expression of interest commit us to?

DL: Nothing.

ESC: AD spoke about application for grant. Assume this is nothing to do with Fenland Inspire project?

DL: No. separate project.

HN: Very enthusiastic in principle. Good opportunity for people to get out and about. Fully support in effort. Slight concern on obligation on WTC with regard to running or management.

DL: No decision yet. Other parks run by management company.. Need to present on what could be possible and present some options.

ESC: What about disbanding of FDC in 3 years – where will that leave us as we are using FDC officers for support?

DL: Very early stages, but much of groundwork already done with Sainsbury's project. Still a lot of work to be done as many people involved at that stage have gone.

DD: Support this idea. Country Park will improve the area for residents. Good education opportunities.

BW: Main concern is potential liability to every council tax payer in Whittlesey.

ED: Main difference between this proposal & Sainsbury is that Sainsbury would have ended up with the asset after time. If asset remains with WTC that is encouraging. Understand Cllr Wicks concerns,; Sainsbury were offering £30k per year support. Best thing to do is outsource to people who know how to do it.

JM: agree in principle. Could be a great asset, could be a massive mess. Eg Heritage centre! Will support it, but need to be prepared to pull the plug quickly if it looks like failing.

DL: Understand where people are coming from. Do not want unitary authority to have it – they would grab with both hands! At moment, don't need any council money. I would commit to making monthly progress and financial report.

ESC: Support in principle. Concern is that familiar with many country parks where surrounding street have extra traffic parking.

Proposed DL/HN Support in principle Unanimous

Proposal to elect a councillor to sit on the liaison group from Eastern Waste Management
Metal Recycling – Cllr Mockett

EWM have asked if a WTC councillor will attend. Limited to one councillor.

Proposed HN/AM that JM take the place. Unanimous.

PB: mindful of public comments earlier. Can we ensure that public comment is asked for and reports are made.

JM: who would come to who: If date is public, would expect Saxongate to offer suggestions.

Proposal – Future use of the Tennis Courts – Cllr Miscandlon

PB: Today have met with FDC officers. New CIC being set up. Contract for lease will be with the CIC. Different plans for raising sponsorship. FDC will look after surface. Lights are being sorted out for tennis club. Looking for handover in summer.

AM: Had enquiries from public. Can we have contact details.

PB: Still with FDC who say they have nobody available to open up with key! PB willing to do this, when available.

DL: FDC have already invested for lights and fencing. Can explain why it has been left so long without being used? Should be a community asset rather than club asset. Part of reason for the tennis club is for tuition. Not seen any of that happening. Could get finding for this! How many on committee?

PB: very few. Had lots of players before moving. Have coached many who have then moved on to places with courts available!

ESC: CPCA funded new courts. Never seen nets there. Clubs and public should be able to use it. A simple key sign out with deposit should suffice. Heard about committee, how many are on it? How many members of the club. Its taxpayers money have a duty to look after it.

PB: disgusted at personal attack.

(RG Note) Text halted due a to rift between Cllrs Bibb and Elizabeth Sennitt-Clough.
What some have called a fractious exchange of views
I am not publishing – as it could/may jeopardise any enquiry as to the event(s).

The Chair Cllr Alex Miscandlon advised the public to behave and be quiet – I understand some 15 members of the public left the meeting at this stage and I have received a number of complaints on this part of the meeting – I have advised those complaining on where they can send their complaint(s) too.

DL: Please clarify will these courts be open to the public?

PB: Yes. Originally just tennis club was offered the lease. Said must include netball club. Came up with the idea of a CIC to combine the two.

DL: We want everyone to be able to share it. On practical level PB opening up won't work long term.

PB: Plans for key retention/booking etc is planned. Short term fix is phone & PB.

HN: Ensure it is open to public and not exclusive to club. Would suggest that PB's plan on how it will be used should be presented to F&P.

JM: Issue is that days away from signing a 25 year lease and nobody in the town was aware of it. Should hold of for 3 weeks for consultation.

ED: Believe the area is owned by FDC. Would it revert back to them at end of lease?

AM: Yes. But would probably extend lease.

DD: Used PBO tennis club court £30 per hour. Park £7 per hour.

AM: Lease will be discussed with me as portfolio holder. Will be shared asset for the benefit of community. It will be a cabinet decision.

20MPH – Funding 2025/26 application process open – Closing date is 28th March 2025 –
Cllr Miscandlon

Town Clerk will send round details of the link.

ED: Was on the teams meeting today. £150k last year, 8 proposals accepted. Total of 91 applications.

JM: Hope not to see any except outside the schools. Ask all Cllrs to put one outside New Road School.

ED: Understand the point about schools. But is a big application foirm

BNW: Not enforceable. Reluctant to spend taxpayers money

DL: Agree that we should support New Road.

Proposal - Whittlesey Town Council supports growth and understands the need for more housing. However, in view of the current disparity between the housing developments and available infrastructure, that is, schools , GPs and roads on the one hand and the needs of the residents on the other hand, it calls for a temporary pause in larger housing developments. It further asks FDC to add the suitability of infrastructure as a criterion to assess planning applications
– Cllr Nawaz

HN: Shortage of school places and standard of education. Potholes and condition of roads. Common denominator appears to be disparity of growth in population and growth of infrastructure. CCC sitting on £ of S106 money.

Calling for a pause to large developments – not small extensions etc. looking for more school places, GP places, better roads. Put pressure on authorities to listen to us.

Proposed HN/JM

BW: government targets, [planning laws, now being relaxed]. A lot of influences on budling outside of our control. GOPs contracted out of NHS – private companies. Support lack of infrastructure concerns. A lot is outside our control, whilst supporting the concepts behind it.

ED: Concern is that a developer will say whatever they think we want to hear. Will agree with S106 payments, then cry viability. FDC often capitulate. On infrastructure – schools GP & Roads – infrastructure goes wider. Problems with water & Sewage. More electricity demands mean limits on generation in Cambs.

JM: Agree that many are outside our remit but we have to start pushing somewhere. Need to make a stand and say enough is enough.

HN: if we use logic that it is beyond our control., then we shouldn't be here. Consultees only.

Passed 2:0 (RG Note I understand there were 8 abstentions)

F27/2025. To receive Councillor & outside body reports.

Local Liaison Committee Meeting 26th November 2024 – Cllr Mockett

First meeting held. Saxongate didn't attend. Minutes not out yet.

Meeting to be held concerning where lorries will run if they get new bottom ash planning.

F28/2025. To report the minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 17th February 2025 and accept the minutes from Monday 20th January 2025

From Town Clerk: Key box: Unanimous.

Flat Roof Repair: Two similar bids.

Local Company agreed.

CAB report - Demand is high. Booked to end of March.

Town Clerk: Extra Hours have been promised. Told we would have to pay for them. Now reverted. RCAB looking into it.

JM: Should be a WTC decision if we want to fund more hours?

DL: Valuable service. Need to ask when/how is it going to happen.

BNW: Desperately needed service. Nice to get more hours for free, but if we have to pay, we should.

ESC: Discussed at F&P. Need someone else in.

JM: ask CAB to come to F&P and make proposal.

ED: Another item for full council: Clarification on banking guarantee rules: Need proposal for Town Clerk to investigate change to bank account.

Passed.

Minutes accepted.

F29/2025 To report the financial documents.

To report the bank reconciliation to 31st January 2025 - To report the list of payments & uncashed payments.

To report the year-to-date figures

All OK

F30/2025. To report the minutes from the Planning Meeting on Monday 17th February 2025 and accept the minutes from Monday 3rd February 2025

All OK

[JM Leaves]

F31/2025. Consultations

Consultation on the proposed 2025 revision of the local validation list for planning applications for the county councils own development and for waste management. Revised draft available, closing date for comments is 10th March 2025

Sue to send out link – individuals to respond.

F32/2025. Information only.

Tennis & Netball courts at the Manor – report from Cllr Bibb
Whittlesey Street Pride update – report from Cllr Dorling
Whittlesey Street Pride Initiatives 2025 – report from Cllr Dorling
First Repair Café – Report from Cllr Dorling
(all in pack)

VE day – Are the council arranging an event – Cllr Mockett
Town Clerk to discuss with JM and see if he wants to circulate anything.

RBL are organising events.

Beacon ordered and will be installed.

DL: How has it come about? Local craftsmen had been discussed.

AM: Sourced through FDC.

Healthwatch feedback – report from Cllr Wicks
Report circulated at meeting

F33/2025 Invitations.

None

F34/2025. Date of next meeting –Thursday 20th March 2025, 6:30pm

F35/2025 – Exclusion of the press & public.

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www.whittleseytowncouncil.gov.uk

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I am **Roy Gerstner** the **only** Councillor in Whittlesey who makes regular reports on Council, Public and Community Group meetings.

I am aware that some Councillors post on Social Media.

I have done so for more than 14+ years both as a member of the public and as a Town and District Councillor.

I have made 8,500+ postings on this site.

I had over 6,000,000 hits on this site.

I have been elected as the **Independent** Fenland District Councillor for The South Ward of Whittlesey along with Gurninder Singh Gill (Conservative).



I have been elected as an **Independent** Whittlesey Town Councillor for the South Ward of Whittlesey South along with Cllr Diana Dickinson (Conservative)

Primarily I report on Council meetings & business (Both at FDC & WTC) to keep the electorate informed on both what I am actively involved with and in part other interests that I believe the electorate within Whittlesey & District may also wish to be informed.

My Web-Blog is community based and I report and comment on many events, meetings and subjects.

I occasionally make a mistake and more than happy to correct if it pointed out to me.

If you have any issues or concerns outside of the Whittlesey South, you are welcome in the first instance to contact your own local Councillor.

If you contact me – I am more than happy to forward it to them. **e&oe** ©Roy Gerstner.

If you have a generic issue or wish to make a comment, I am more than happy to publish or promote any community events – (subject to meeting publishing criteria).

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FRG 2022

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RIP Alison Bacon who passed away this week.